



# South Arkansas Fire Protection District

## Meeting Minutes

**Date:** November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Time:** 0900 Hours

**Location:** 124 E Street, Salida, CO 81201

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### Board Members Present:

- Harold Starbuck
- Fred Jackson
- Art Hutchinson
- Rich Edgington

### Board Members Absent:

- Jeff Graf
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### Meeting Proceedings:

#### 1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by President Harold Starbuck at 0902 hours.

#### 2. Approval of the Agenda: Motion to approve the November Board meeting minutes as presented.

- **Motion:** Rich Edgington moved to accept the agenda as presented
- **Second:** Art Hutchinson

- **Vote:** Passed unanimously
  - 3. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:** Motion to approve the October minutes as presented.
    - **Motion:** Art Hutchinson moved to approve the minutes from the previous board meeting presented
    - **Second:** Fred Jackson
    - **Vote:** Passed unanimously
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#### **Open Session:**

- **Craig Summers, Sheldon Morgan, and Ken** expressed their concern for wildfire mitigation in Pinon Ridge Estates, where they reside. They requested equipment and overall support in the extraction of built-up brush and slash around their subdivision and BLM lands. Subdivision is occupied by full time residents / families and is comprised of 17 lots.
  - **Mike Sugaski** addressed the board to ask about efforts to secure funding for mitigation and to understand South Ark's priorities regarding risk assessment. Mike also mentioned the frequent traffic that these areas receive by hikers, bikers, campers, and houseless individuals – whom of which often start unregulated campfires that increase risk for wildfire.
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#### **Reports:**

##### **1. Financial Report:**

- **Sarah Marques**, from Walke & Associates, provided an updated 2025 budget for the board to review and approve by the next board meeting.
- **Motion:** Motion to accept the monthly financial report as presented.
  - **Motion:** Fred Jackson
  - **Second:** Rich Edgington
  - **Vote:** Passed Unanimously

##### **2. Attorney Report:**

The attorney has not provided an update around the IGA. The board aims to resolve the IGA prior to confirming the 2025 budget.

##### **3. Fire Chief Report:**

Chief Aaron Jonke discussed several critical issues:

- Chief expressed his concerns around staffing issues within the department due to injuries. The Chief has hired 8 Reserve Firefighters that will be used to help address staffing needs. Chief will also fill (1) fulltime firefighter.
- The Chief discussed the grant opportunities that are being pursued. They are as follows;
  - FRWRM Grant
  - PPE Grant through the DFPC
  - All Hazards Grant for updated radios
  - AFG Grant for a live burn facility
- Chief expressed the need for a more robust training plan for 2025 so that the crew can perform critical tasks at a higher level.
- **Existing Equipment:**
  - **(2) Type-6** : Brush 112 is deployed in California and should be returning in the next few weeks. Minor maintenance due to wear and tear will need to be done.
  - **(1) Type- 3** : SAFPD newest engine has returned and is in good condition. It is ready for local use or deployment
- Chief addressed grants that are currently being worked on:
  - **FRWRM:** It is a high priority to secure this grant, as it will support wildfire mitigation efforts in and around the community. Additionally, the grant will facilitate the promotion of a qualified crew member to the position of Wildland Chief. The Chief is hopeful in the likelihood of obtaining this grant, though official confirmation is not expected until March 2025.
  - **DFPC:** directed towards firefighter personal protective equipment (PPE) with emphasis on replacing fire shelters.
  - **Radio replacement:** a grant through the Office of Emergency Operations to facilitate the upgrade of the District's older radios
  - **AFG:** applying for a grant through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program to fund the purchase of a live burn facility for the District. Currently, there are no live burn facilities on the south side of the county.
- **Legislative Update:** Chief Jonke is actively monitoring legislation regarding property taxes, as it may have a significant impact on special district fire departments across the state. Governor Polis has

acknowledged the challenges this legislation could pose and plans to address the issue by March 2025

- **New Fire House Report:** Construction is nearly 90% done with efforts being directed towards the exterior of the building. Aspirations to move-in by late December 2024 is currently on track although there have been building delays (i.e. folding doors not being delivered on time) as well as weather delays that may affect this date.

**4. Assistant Fire Chief Report:**

- Chief Rohrich reported that there was a \$105.00 attorney fee associated with a conversation that she had in regards to a Request for Exclusion.

**5. Wild Land Coordinator:**

Captain Bainbridge reported on the district's current wild land team and equipment deployments as well as maintenance / repairs that are needed:

- **Team Deployment:** Staff is still in California, Texas, and West Virginia. There is a required team swap for the type 6 in California that is needed by November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024.
- **Equipment Deployment:**
  - **Type 6:** Deployed in California
  - **Type 3:** Returned and was intended to be sent back out to West Virginia, but the snow delayed this discharge.
- **Maintenance / Repairs:** Type 6 will need work for general wear and tear as well as addressing larger maintenance issues.
- Captain Bainbridge also communicated to the Pinon Ridge Estate citizens that part of the grant funding that Bainbridge is hoping to obtain will help widen roads that are used to access wild fire events and will help with mitigation efforts.

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**Unfinished Business:**

- None.
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### **New Business:**

- **President Starbuck** mentioned the importance of integrating the newly updated SAFPD logo onto all appropriate materials and apparatus.
- **President Starbuck** also mentioned the annual Christmas party as a way of expressing appreciation for the wild land and firefighting crew. Details around this party are being discussed. Party will be held on **December 15<sup>th</sup>**.
  - **Motion:** Motion to host a Christmas appreciation party for the firefighters of the South Arkansas Fire Protection District.
    - **Motion:** Rich Edgington
    - **Second:** Fred Jackson
    - **Vote:** Passed Unanimously

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### **Good of the Order:**

No Report

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- **Motion to enter Executive Session** for the purpose of determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiation, developing negotiation strategies, and/or instructing negotiators under C.R.S. Section 24-6-402(4)(e), specifically concerning the intergovernmental agreement with the City of Salida.
  - **Motion by:** Rich Edgington
  - **Second:** Art Hutchinson
  - **Vote:** Passed Unanimously
  
- **Motion:** To Adjourn Executive Session at 10:23
- **Motion By:** Rich Edgington
- **Second:** Art Hutchinson
- **Vote:** Passed Unanimously

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**Adjournment: Motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:24**

- **Motion to Adjourn:** Rich Edgington
- **Second:** Art Hutchinson
- **Vote:** Passed Unanimously

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Art Hutchinson', written in a cursive style.

Respectfully submitted,

Art Hutchinson  
Acting Secretary Treasurer